

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **A drop in the ocean**

*01 October 2014, Johannesburg:* There's nothing quite like a free and easy coastal cottage, with endless views of the ocean, barefoot strolls on the beach, a fresh sea breeze, and laid back living. Sue Scott, from leading furniture retailer, Grafton Everest, gives her take on how to recreate the allure of a summer getaway with breezy colours and casual materials that will make you want to kick off your office shoes and embrace the beachy vibe, whether you live by the coast or not.

### **Shore thing**

“The first step to creating an ocean-inspired living room in your home is to draw inspiration from the hues and textures of the sea,” suggests Sue. Think about the kind of scenery you're attracted to most – is it a hot Mediterranean setting with intense turquoise water and pebbled beaches, the gentle West Coast dunes with grey-green vegetation, the brightly coloured coral and fish of the deep sea, dark stormy waves crashing up onto steep rock faces, or the muted colours of sea urchins lurking in the little rock pools? “By drawing on your favorite elements to translate into your décor scheme, you can create a space that's not merely a generic beach house look, but one that has a unique character and says something about your individual sense of style and preferences,” says Sue.

### **Coastal chic**

Quintessential beach house textures include a variety of natural materials, such as rope, driftwood, straw, linen, cotton, pebbles, cane and timber. “This look is easy on the wallet if you have the will. Head to your local flea market or secondhand store in search of old pieces that can simply do with a lick of fresh white paint, or scavenge the shoreline for interesting shells and frosted glass to fill a vase.” However, Sue warns not to overdo it to the extent that it makes you feel sea sick: “A lounge with overstuffed slipcover sofas looks oh-so-chic with a sleek glass and chrome coffee table and scatters in a blue chevron print. The key is restraint, you don't want to go overboard with sea life motifs and other dust-collecting clutter.” Contrasting modern pieces with rougher textures brings this look right into the present day, one needn't even stick to the tried and tested neutral tones of a traditional coastal look. Try introducing bursts of pink, chartreuse or yellow to up the octane and add a quirky twist to a subdued seaside scheme.

### **True blue tips**

Sue offers the following ideas, tips and pointers on how to easily achieve a successful beach-inspired look in your home:

- Turn a non-descript space located next to a window, and turn it into an inviting and secluded spot where you can relax and unwind by simply introducing a daybed or corner unit under the window, dress the window with sheer muslin drapes that billow in the breeze, and a scattering of linen cushions. In this way, you can recreate your perfect holiday-inspired hideout where you can kick back in the sun with a good book or enjoy a relaxing after-lunch snooze, and it can also double up as a spare bed for guests when the need arises.

- In the entrance hall, fill a coat rack with wide brimmed straw hats to prevent them from getting misshapen, add a white washed wooden bench underneath the coat rack to provide somewhere to place your handbag and put your shoes on, or hang an old wooden shutter on the wall where you can slot post away for another day.
- Expecting guests? Opt for an informal table setting with stacks of organic-shaped plates, a white enamel tin filled with cutlery, and a wad of linen napkins. When we go on a beach vacation everyone helps themselves to whatever they want, whenever they want to. There's no strict etiquette or set places, I often just end up eating with my plate on my lap in the comfiest chair I can find.
- This kind of décor works well when you play with fabric - mix stripes with beach motifs and textured neutrals, but don't go to town. The key is to create visual lightness, and this so easily achieved with the use of various tones of white, glass objets d'arte, cotton slipcovers, and mirrors to reflect the light.
- Also – add natural and handmade elements to the décor scheme in the form of hand-woven baskets, distressed upcycled furniture, or interesting theme-inspired items, such as an old oar that is hung on the wall as a feature. Rethink how objects are used – it is easy to cleverly upcycle them on a shoestring for a playful twist.
- As warmer temperatures set in, you can begin to start swapping out your heavier and darker accessories with lighter ones. Changing your look seasonally is the ideal time to give your home a spring clean – get your heavy rugs and throws professionally cleaned and store them away so they stay fresh for next winter, clear out all the unnecessary clutter, reposition armchairs to face the view outside, instead of the fireplace, and touch up your walls with paint for a fresh overall feel.

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